

YOUTH SPORTS ADVISORY BOARD

Monday, December 8, 2008

Summary Notes

Board members present: Jim Gibson, Bob Moir, Brian Donegan, Mike Neilson, Don Simpson, Jeff Murphy, Bill Rivers

Staff member present: Mac Slover

Guest: Roger Blakeley (ADPR&CA)

Jim started the meeting by thanking all Board members for their efforts over the past year. He also passed the Board's thanks on to the City representatives for the outstanding work that they have done over the year. The excellent relationships that have developed have contributed to many positive developments for the youth of Alexandria.

He also indicated that he would be inviting TC coaches and Council members to the January Board meeting.

The November minutes were read and accepted as written with Bob motioning for acceptance and Don seconding that.

Roger then took some time to bring the Board up to date on the impacts of reductions in the City's budget. He started by reviewing the progress to date on fields with many thanks to the Board members for their work getting things done.

- 2007 – The artificial turf field at Minnie Howard was completed.
- 2008 - Artificial turf fields were put in at Fort Ward and T. C. Williams; the Four Mile Run baseball field was improved; and the Four Mile soccer field was re-done entirely.
- 2009 - Negotiations are underway for the developer at Potomac Yards to finalize plans for two artificial turf rectangular fields (with the City contributing funds to upgrade to the artificial turf)

Then he went into what is planned:

- 2010 - Two artificial turf fields at Braddock along with a baseball diamond; two artificial turf fields at Roth-Witter; one softball or baseball diamond at Roth-Witter.
- 2011/2012 - Artificial turf open use fields at Mount Vernon and Ewald.

However, all Capital Improvement Projects (including the planned fields) are on hold due to the budget crisis. The Council will need to approve specific projects to get the funds

released. If the Board wants to meet the planned field growth, it will have to make sure that Council is aware of its position.

Also Roger indicated that budget cuts will force the City to use seasonal employees rather than permanent employees to oversee games at certain fields. This would also impact on the basketball games as well where parent volunteers will have to assume some of the support previously provided by the City.

One item that came up for discussion was the possibility of using money set aside for the All-City Sports Facility to build the artificial turf fields – if the matching private sector funds for the Facility are not raised.

The Board decided that it would be wise to send a letter to Judy Noritake (Chair, Parks and Recreation Commission) expressing our concerns about impacts of the budget situation on the field plan, since that Commission is the parent one for our Board. The letter to be sent would ask that our concerns be passed on to the City staff and to the City Council. Bill will draft a letter and send it around for review.

Mac spent some time highlighting the new User Fee schedule that will be effective as of January 1st. Most registrations will cost more (still below neighboring jurisdictions) and there will be a field use fee for affected sports.

Bob announced that there will be a Parks and Recreation Commission meeting on December 11th to discuss items such as the field use fee. Also under decision will be whether such fees should go directly back to youth/adult sports or into the general City funds.

Before doing the individual sports updates, Jim reminded people about the significance of the budget cuts. Sports groups need to be aware of what is happening and try to work with the City to anticipate where the cuts will be. They may also want to consider private fund raising as well.

Sports updates:

Mac:

- Girls Volleyball
 - Finishing this Friday
 - Strong link to T.C.'s team.
- Basketball
 - 96 teams; 8 more than last year
 - Girls 14 and Under will play against Arlington schools.
 - Some duties will have to be taken over by volunteers.
 - With Houston not finished, still some space constraints in terms of practice.

- Can practice at T. C., but costs too much money to use the gym for games.
- Cheerleading
 - Season ending Exhibition at T. C. on the 13th.
- Baseball and Girls Softball
 - Registration has started on-line.
- Football
 - 15 teams; 330 players
 - 10 teams in playoffs; 5 champions
 - Honored at the Sportsmen's Club

Brian (Lacrosse)

- Registration has opened for the Spring season.

Jeff (Rugby)

- The boosters met with T. C. (A. D. Bob McKeag)
 - Continuing as club with some school support

Jim mentioned that there was a wrestling club that practiced at Bishop Ireton. They had been turned down by T. C. due to concerns about staph infection.

The meeting adjourned with the next meeting date being set for January 12th.